

DRAFT



**Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes**

July 15, 2010
Room 204 Town Hall

Pursuant to a notice duly posted with the Town Clerk and with a quorum of members present, the Acton Economic Development Committee (EDC) convened at 7:00 p.m. on July 15, 2010 to review various matters.

7:10PM Chair Doug Tindal called the meeting to order.

Members present for the meeting: Nancy Dinkel, Dick Calandrella, Doug Tindal, Leigh Davis-Honn, Dave Didriksen, and Ann Chang.

Also present were Kristen Alexander, Town of Acton, in her capacity as liaison to the Committee, and Roland Bartl in his capacity as Planning Director of the Town

- I. (No Public Participation)
- II. The Committee approved the minutes of the July first meeting.
- III. A. Open Meeting Law (OML): The Committee discussed the requirements of the newly issued Open Meeting Law Guidelines and their applicability to various situations when members are communicating by email.

B. Agenda and Meeting Minutes formats were also discussed as they relate to the OML, and the Committee concluded that its present process is in compliance with respect to Minutes, but some of the members present felt that the Agendas should be less detailed and relate more to new business.
- IV. Signage Bylaw Enforcement: Roland described his approach to the enforcement of the signage bylaw, and members of the Signage Bylaw Panel expressed their view as to some techniques which they felt would improve the process by more emphasis on education and voluntary compliance. The consensus was that the 'talk first, paper second' recommendation of the Panel had merit and could actually reduce work load caused by citation processing. This was tempered by the fact that we are facing a backlog of old citations which must be dealt with while many non-conforming signs are still out there. The conclusion reached was that the Planning Department and the Panel, as well as the

EDC would henceforth work more closely so that our mutual efforts are coordinated among staff, the panel, town counsel, and elected officials.

- V. Data Gathering: Roland brought the committee up to date on the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) data gathering process and described how the work would be done. The EDC had been asking for information in the near term, and hearing that there would be a good deal of new information available in the Fall when the consultants had concluded their work, the Demographics Team members present agreed that they could hold off until then in developing the EDC list of data points.

There then followed a wide ranging discussion of time limitations which make it difficult for staff in Town Hall to respond to a variety of data requests from standing committees as well as for special projects. Ideas were reviewed relating to outside sources of help, such as a cooperative venture with the Schools, more cooperation for data sharing on the regional level through organizations such as MAPC, and the use of consultants such as the Donahue Institute. The committee agreed that the Town should be working to create a centralized data base of commonly needed information and share it among staff, departments, committees, and the public.

- VI. Marketing Team: Marketing Team leader Leigh Davis-Honn summarized the latest marketing efforts and indicated the schedule for upcoming events. Ms. Davis-Honn also stated that she and Dick Calandrella will be meeting with the Town's Clerk Office and Assessors Department in late July to gain better understanding of the "Doing Business As (DBA)" list.
- VII. Support of Existing Business Team: Team leader Dave Didriksen summarized recent activities, emphasizing that most effort has been related to the Signage Bylaw Panel and the enforcement process.
- VIII. Path Forward: Doug Tindal reminded the committee that a primary goal is to expand membership in support of the active Teams working on Demographics, Marketing, and Support of New Businesses.

At 9:20 Dick Calandrella made a motion to adjourn which was approved unanimously.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday August 5 in the Faulkner Meeting Room at Town Hall.

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